



Making Sense of Suffering

ACTS: The Sequel
Week #11



A man who...

relied on
God's power

Stephen's Story



A man who...

taught the
truth

Stephen's Story

Three Truths

God cannot be
confined geographically



Three Truths

God will *destroy*
any practice that
keeps people
from Him



Three Truths

Jesus is not *against*
Moses, the Law,
the Temple or Customs.
He is the
fulfillment of them.

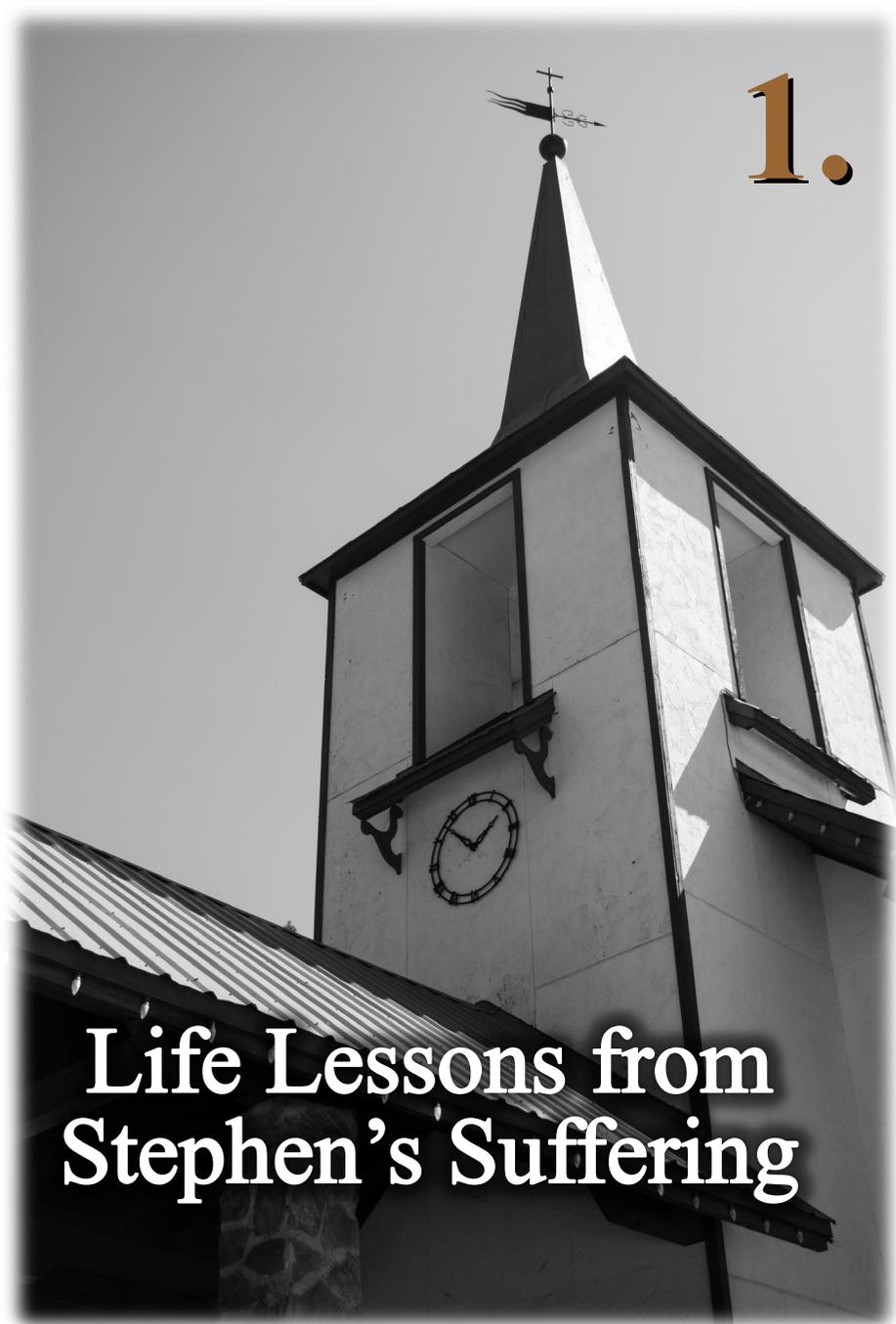




A man who...

suffered
unjustly

Stephen's Story



Life Lessons from
Stephen's Suffering

1. Suffering reveals the world we live in.

“¹⁰But they could not stand up against the wisdom the Spirit gave him as he spoke.”

“¹¹Then they secretly persuaded...”

“¹²So they stirred up the people...”

“¹³They produced false witnesses...”

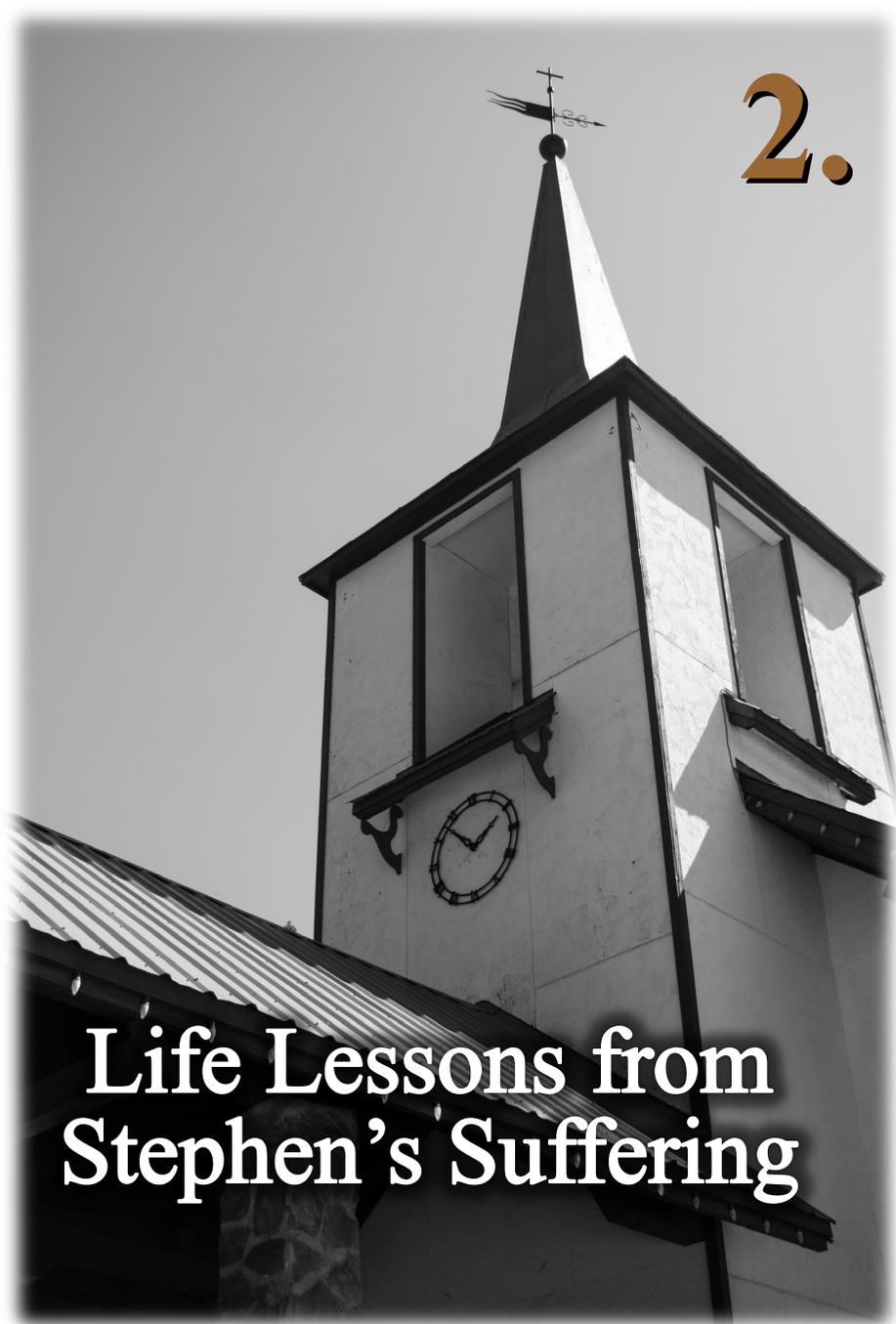
Acts 6:10-13

God's Word Says...

“God saw all that he had made,
and it was very good.

And there was evening, and there was
morning—the sixth day.””

Genesis 1:31



2. Suffering reveals our spiritual maturity.

“⁵⁹ While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’ ⁶⁰ Then he fell on his knees and cried out, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them.’ When he had said this, he fell asleep.”

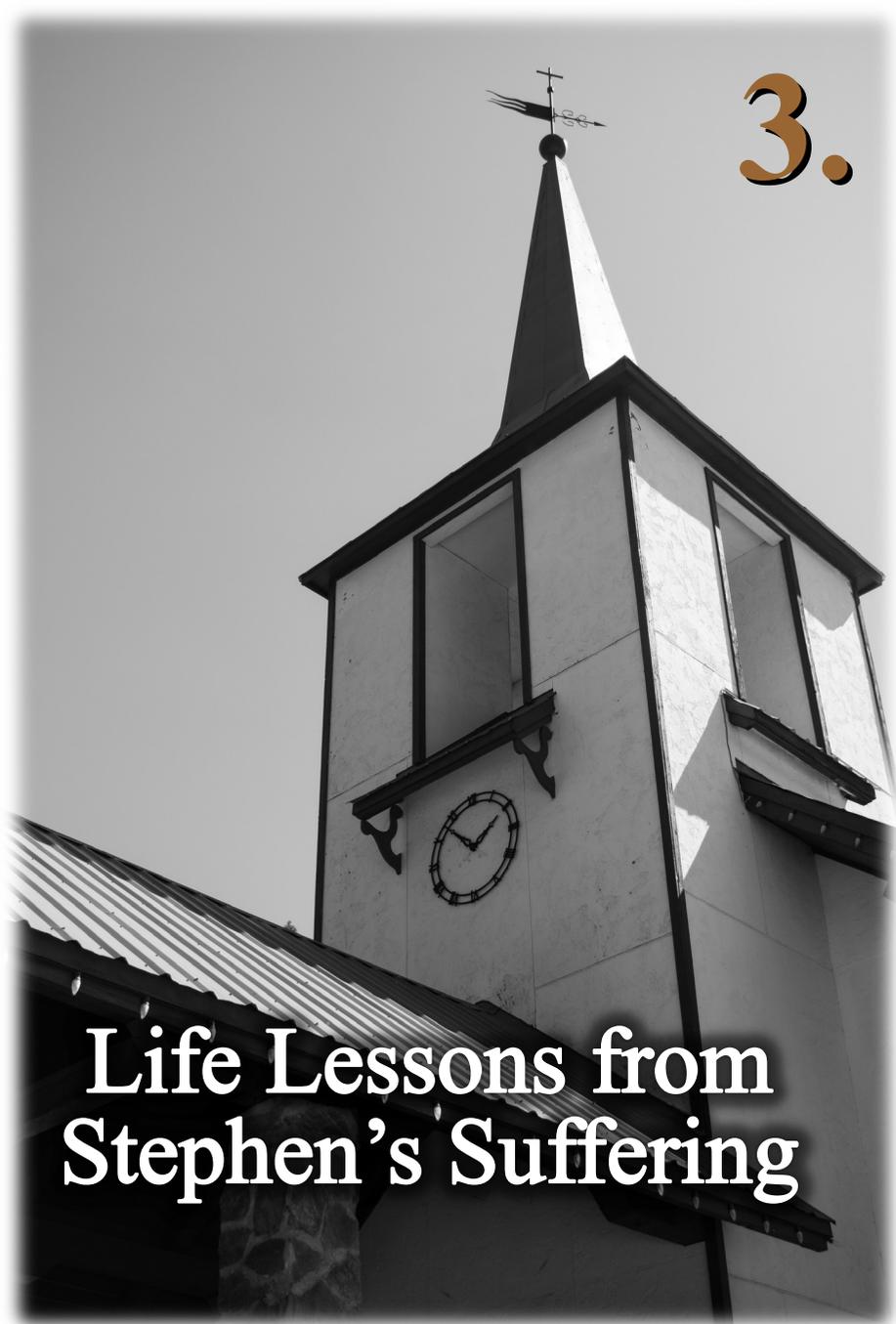
Acts 7:59-60

Life Lessons from
Stephen's Suffering

God's Word Says...

“² Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters,
whenever you face trials of many kinds,
³because you know that the testing of your faith
produces perseverance. ⁴Let perseverance finish its
work so that you may be mature and complete,
not lacking anything.””

James 1:2-4



3. Suffering reveals our meaning in life.

“⁵⁴When the members of the Sanhedrin heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. ⁵⁵But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and **Jesus standing** at the right hand of God.”

Acts 7:54-55

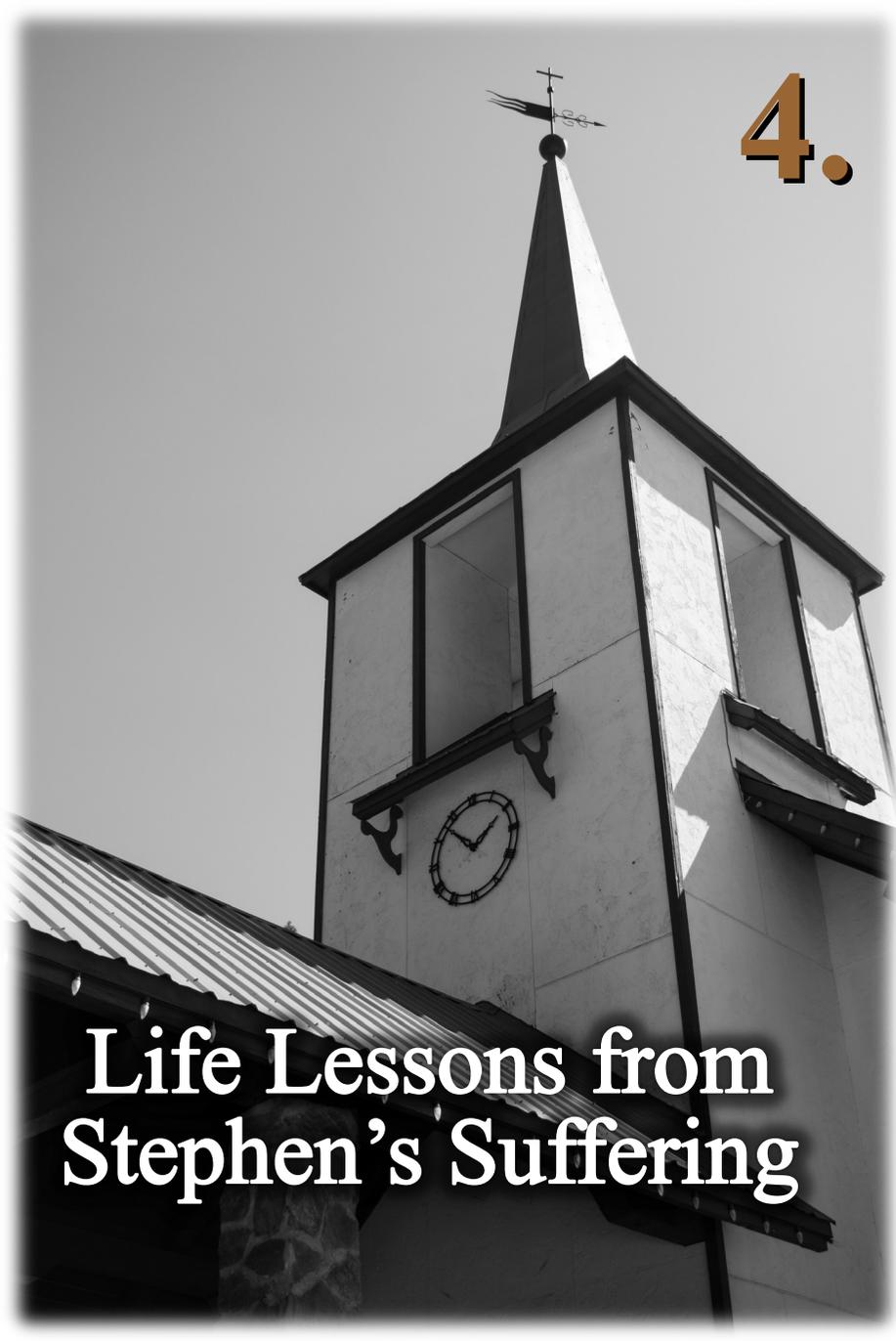
Life Lessons from
Stephen's Suffering

God's Word Says...

“My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

“Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”

1 John 2:1

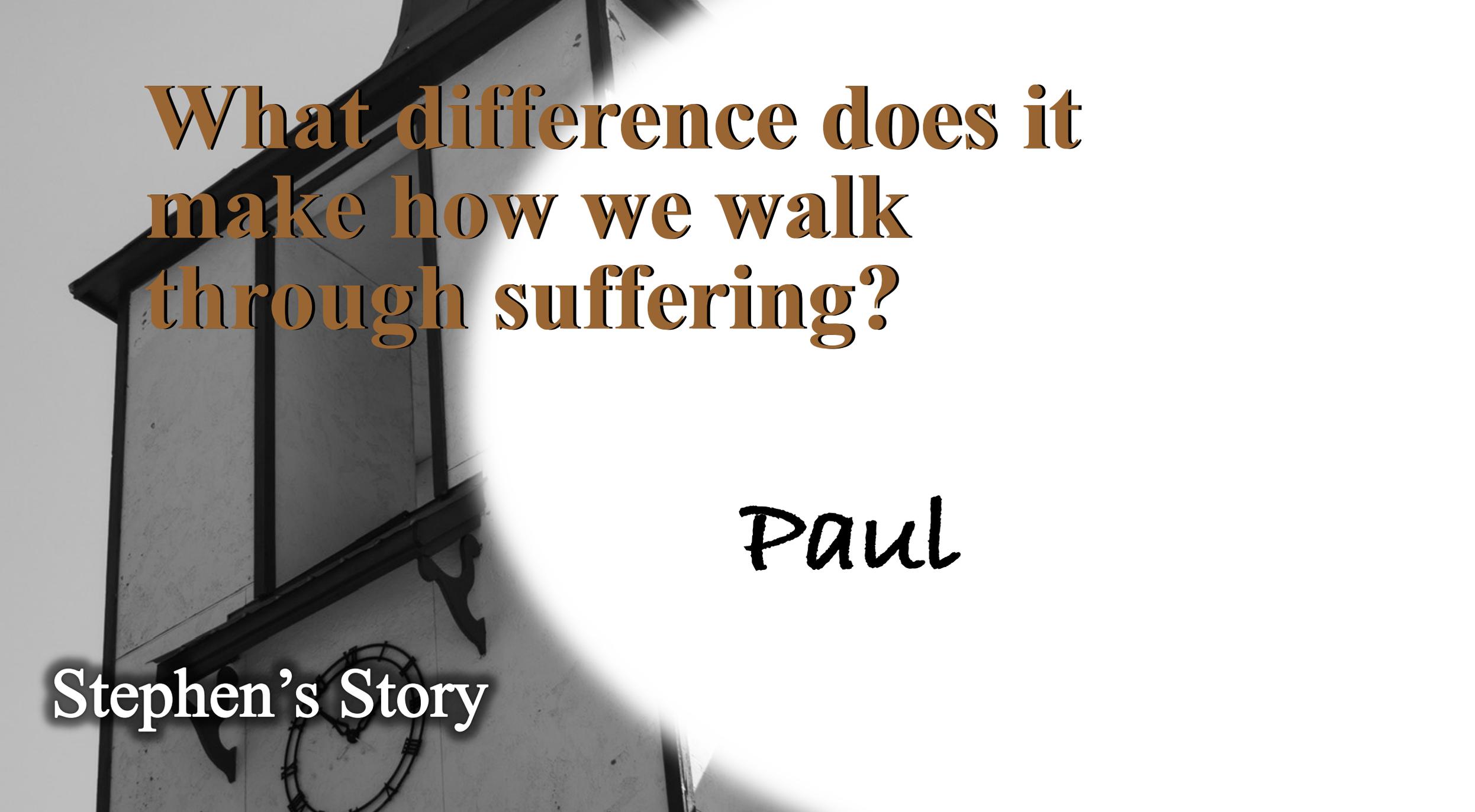


4. Suffering reveals our motivations.

“You stiff-necked people!
Your hearts and ears are still
uncircumcised. You are just like
your ancestors: You always resist
the Holy Spirit!”

Life Lessons from
Stephen's Suffering

Acts 7:51



**What difference does it
make how we walk
through suffering?**

PAUL

Stephen's Story

God's Word Says...

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”

Romans 8:28